

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 0061

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIS CU UR AO
SUBJ: CUBAN FISHERIES - SOVIET/ANGOLA TIES

1. USINT OFFICER (GLASSMAN), IN COURSE OF SEPTEMBER 6 CONVERSATION ON 1978 FISHERIES APPLICATION, ASKED VICE-MINISTER OF FISHERIES INDUSTRY ALDO MARGOLLES ABOUT USSR-CUBA FISHERIES CONSULTATIONS HELD IN HAVANA, SEPTEMBER 3-4. MARGOLLES STATED THAT SOVIETS' PRINCIPAL CONTRIBUTION NOW TO CUBA WAS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT FUEL SUPPLY FOR CUBAN FLEET. THERE WERE NOW LESS THAN ONE HUNDRED SOVIET CAPTAINS AND TECHNICIANS OPERATING AT SEA WITH CUBANS AND THESE WILL BE PHASED OUT SHORTLY. CUBANS ARE NOW PAYING BACK SOVIETS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HAVANA AND OTHER FISHING PORTS BY REPAIRING SOVIET FISHING VESSELS. SUPERVISION OF THESE REPAIRS IS SOLE FUNCTION OF SOVIET LIAISON REPRESENTATIVE AT MINISTRY OF FISHING INDUSTRY. THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR SOVIET CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL FISHING VESSELS FOR CUBA. NEW CONSTRUCTION IS TAKING PLACE IN SPAIN AND JAPAN.

2. WITH REGARD TO ANGOLA, MARGOLLES STATED THAT CUBANS HAD TWO AGREEMENTS. CUBANS, UNDER FIRST TECHNICAL AGREEMENT, PROVIDED ADVICE TO NEW ANGOLAN FISHING FLEET. UNDER SECOND, COMMERCIAL
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AGREEMENT, ANGOLANS ALLOWED CUBANS TO FISH IN THEIR FISHERY ZONE AND OVER THEIR CONTINENTAL SHELF. CUBANS WERE ALLOWED TO CATCH UNLIMITED AMOUNTS OF TUNA FREE, BUT WERE REQUIRED TO PAY ANGOLANS FOR SHRIMP. MARGOLLES BELIEVED, BUT WAS NOT SURE, THAT PAYMENTS WERE IN HARD CURRENCY. (GUYANA ALSO ALLOWS CUBA TO FISH FOR SHRIMP ON ITS CONTINENTAL SHELF, MARGOLLES SAID.)

3. WITH REGARD TO DISPOSITION OF FISH, MARGOLLES SAID CUBAN CATCHES OF TUNA, LOBSTER, SHRIMP, AND MOST BONITO, SNAPPER, AND GROUPER ARE EXPORTED. HAKE, MACKEREL, AND SQUID ARE SOLD DOMESTICALLY, WITH SOME SNAPPER AND GROUPER RATIONED TO NURSERY SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, AND LUXURY HOTELS.

4. MARGOLLES SAID THAT CUBANS WOULD PARTICULARLY LIKE TO EXPAND SHRIMP FISHERIES, ESPECIALLY IN GULF (IF US PERMITS). COMPANIES IN SPAIN, JAPAN AND FRANCE HAVE APPROACHED CUBANS REGARDING CONSTRUCTION OF BOATS FOR THIS PURPOSE, BUT FINANCING WILL BE PROBLEMATIC, GIVEN PRESENT HARD CURRENCY SQUEEZE.

5. MARGOLLES NOTED THAT CUBANS HAVE FISHERIES RESEARCH VESSEL WHICH CURRENTLY PERFORMS INVESTIGATIONS IN COLLABORATION WITH SOVIETS. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER WHETHER SOME JOINT PROJECT WITH CUBANS MIGHT BE POSSIBLE IN THIS AREA.
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